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**'CYBERSCAMMER' SENTENCED TO 30 MONTHS FOR USING DECEPTIVE
INTERNET NAMES TO MISLEAD MINORS TO X-RATED SITES**

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that JOHN ZUCCARINI, 53, was sentenced today to 30 months in prison in Manhattan federal court on charges that he created and used misleading domain names on the Internet to deceive minors into logging on to pornographic Web sites.

According to a previously-filed 50-count Information and criminal Complaint, ZUCCARINI, operating from a hotel in Hollywood, Florida, registered and used misleading domain names on the Internet in order to earn money by directing Internet users to Web sites which advertise for, among other things, pornography. According to the Complaint, the activity allegedly netted ZUCCARINI as much as \$1 million a year.

According to the Information and Complaint, ZUCCARINI used various Internet registries to register domain names which consist of close misspellings of popular legitimate domain names. For

example, ZUCCARINI registered the Internet domain name "WWW.DINSEYLAND.COM," which is a misspelling of "WWW.DISNEYLAND.COM," the legitimate domain name for an amusement park owned and operated by the Walt Disney Corporation. According to the Information and Complaint, ZUCCARINI registered at least 3,000 such misleading domain names.

In addition, according to the Complaint, in many cases, ZUCCARINI registered multiple misspellings of the same legitimate domain name. For example, ZUCCARINI registered 16 misspellings and variations of the legitimate Website "BRITNEYSPEARS.COM," a Website owned and operated by Britney Spears, a popular female singer. According to the Complaint, ZUCCARINI did this in order to ensure that every possible misspelling of that legitimate domain would cause Internet users to access advertising Web sites that pay ZUCCARINI for bringing viewers to their sites.

The Information and Complaint charged that many of the domain names ZUCCARINI registered are misspellings or variations of Web sites associated with entertainers, celebrities and cartoon characters that are popular with young children. For example, ZUCCARINI registered the domain name "WWW.BOBTHEBIULDER.COM" and "WWW.TELTUBBIES.COM" which are, respectively, misspellings of the Web sites for "Bob The Builder" and "Teletubbies," both of which are cartoon characters popular with young children.

According to the Complaint, investigation by the United

States Postal Inspection Service revealed that if a person were to inadvertently access either "WWW.BOBTHEBIUILDER.COM" or "WWW.TELTUBBIES.COM," the person would be presented with advertisements for free access to pornography including numerous images of hard-core pornography, such as explicit photographs of young people engaging in sexual intercourse.

Specifically, as described in the Complaint, on May 19 and May 20, 2003, investigators with the United States Postal Inspection Service in New York accessed the ZUCCARINI-controlled variations of the "Bob The Builder," "Britney Spears," "Disneyland," and "Teletubbies" Web sites discussed above. Upon accessing these ZUCCARINI-controlled sites, the investigators computer was automatically directed to a Web page which, according to the domain name which appeared in the computer's browser, was known as "amaturevideos.nl."

Almost immediately thereafter, the investigator's computer was automatically redirected to another Web site; this Web site had the domain name "HANKY-PANKY-COLLEGE.com" (the "Hanky-Panky Site"). Further access of the Hanky-Panky Site by the investigator led to a Web page entitled "Dorm Sex Party." This Web page contained pictures of partially nude young people engaging in sexual activity. The investigator's attempts to close this page by clicking on the "close" button of his computer screen did not close the page.

Rather, it opened additional pages on the Hanky-Panky Site, including a Web page containing a collage comprised of several graphic pornographic pictures. Virtually all of the pornographic images observed by the investigator were advertisements for, among other things, free access to pornography.

On December 10, 2003, ZUCCARINI pled guilty before Chief United States District Court Judge MICHAEL B. MUKASEY to 49 counts of violating the Truth in Domain Names Act. In addition, ZUCCARINI pled guilty to one count of possessing child pornography. The prosecution, guilty plea, and sentencing is the first of its kind to be brought under the Truth in Domain Names Act, which was enacted on April 30, 2003, as part of the "Amber Alert" legislation.

As described in the Complaint, ZUCCARINI's activities in directing Internet users to Web Sites depicting pornography were the subject of numerous consumer complaints, lawsuits by legitimate domain name holders, and an enforcement action by the Federal Trade Commission for unfair and deceptive practices.

In civil lawsuits brought against ZUCCARINI by private citizens whose domain names he has used misleading versions of, ZUCCARINI admitted that one reason why he registered domain names of Web sites popular with children was because children are more likely than adults to make spelling errors and to mistype Web site addresses.

In addition, in those civil lawsuits, ZUCCARINI admitted

that he earned between \$.10 and \$.25 for every viewer who he brought to the Web sites which advertised for pornography, and admitted earning a total of as much as \$800,000 to \$1 million per year from his use of misleading domain names.

Attorney General JOHN ASHCROFT stated: "Individuals who use trickery and deceit to lure children to X-rated websites must know that they will pay a price for their criminal conduct. The Truth in Domain Names Act was designed to create a safer, cleaner online environment for children. As today's sentence demonstrates, those who violate that law and expose innocent children to pornography for their own financial gain will be prosecuted, and they will serve time in jail."

Mr. KELLEY praised the investigative efforts of the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Consumer Protection, Division of Marketing Practices, and the Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section.

Assistant United States Attorney JOSEPH V. De MARCO is in charge of the prosecution.

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